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## Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii.

### PRAYER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Today's opening prayer will be offered by the guest Chaplain, Rev. Edward T. Kelaher, of All Saints Church, Chevy Chase, MD.

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Father God, You alone are the sovereign Lord of this great Nation. Send Your Spirit among the men and women of this Chamber that Your will on Earth may be done as it is in Heaven.

People suffer, children hunger, laborers strain under their burdens, and those without a voice cry out in silence. Yet we stand before You at risk of doing little or nothing to comfort and relieve them unless our hearts are yielded to You alone. There is nothing we can do without You.

Give our Senators wisdom beyond human understanding, courage beyond their human hearts, and a sense of urgency and benevolence that matches Your own. Lord, as You hear the cries and prayers of Your people, enable our leaders by Your Holy Spirit to hear likewise in humility and charity.

We pray these words in Your holy Name. Amen.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

### APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication

to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,  
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,  
Washington, DC, February 14, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ, a Senator from the State of Hawaii, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,  
President pro tempore.

Mr. SCHATZ thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

### RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

### SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following my remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of the nomination of Senator Hagel to be Secretary of Defense.

Yesterday I filed cloture on the Hagel nomination. That vote will occur tomorrow morning.

### HAGEL NOMINATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in less than 2 hours our country will be without a Secretary of Defense at a time when we have a war going on in Afghanistan and about 70,000 troops there. We have a nuclear weapon which was detonated in North Korea a few days ago. They are threatening, as they have publicly on other occasions, but after this bomb was set off, that they are doing it to attack us. We have this situation in Iran with all their very militaristic statements against us.

All over the world America is involved in matters dealing with our

military. I met the night before last in my office with the man who killed Osama bin Laden. I talked to him about his 16-year career as a SEAL and the places he went around the world protecting the interests of the United States. It wasn't just in Afghanistan, not only in Pakistan, but all over the world.

To think we have now in the Senate a situation where we are going to wind up without a Secretary of Defense at this time. We had all the talk—you know, we have some questions about Senator Hagel.

Keep in mind he is a Republican. They say: We have some questions to ask. But publicly a significant number of Republican Senators have said they would not filibuster.

Remember, there has never in the history of the country been a filibuster of a Defense Secretary nominee—never.

I needed to file cloture. Not all the shows, but a number of shows, attacked me last night. They said: We told REID and all these people we shouldn't have agreed to the rules changes because this is what we have going on.

I am ignoring that, but it is shocking that my Republican colleagues would leave the Nation without a fully empowered Secretary of Defense during all the things we have going on in the world, including a war. Several of my colleagues requested a letter from the President. A letter was sent at their request to the chairman of the committee, which is standard procedure, with Senator LEVIN answering all their questions.

They said: We need that letter so we may vote. One stall after another. I am told now that the letter was sent to the chairman of the committee, and that is not good enough. They want it sent to individual Senators.

This isn't high school getting ready for a football game or some play that is being produced at high school, we are trying to confirm somebody to run the defense of our country, the military of

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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